

CLEAN VERSION OF THE AMENDED CLAIMS

October 17, 2002

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 6, 26-37, 41-43, and 45-46.

Please amend claims 1, 7, 9, 18, 44 and 47 as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) A mower head comprising:  
a deck having at least three sides and at least  
one side wall depending from said deck;  
at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to  
5 said deck on an axis extending through said deck, said  
deck being disposed above and generally parallel to said  
blade; and  
a guard assembly comprising:  
an actuating member mounted on said deck,  
10 a guard attached to said actuating member  
and pivotally attached to said deck via a hinge which is  
mounted to two of said at least three sides and extends at  
an obtuse angle in relation to two of said at least three  
sides of said deck, and  
15 a flap depending from said guard and  
movable in relation to said guard, said flap being  
oriented in a plane spaced from a plane of said guard.

7. (Twice Amended) The mower head of claim 1  
wherein said actuating member is mounted on said deck at  
a location spaced from said hinge.

9. (Twice Amended) A mower head comprising:  
a deck having at least three sides;  
at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to  
5 said deck on an axis extending through said deck, said  
deck being disposed above and generally parallel to said

blade; and

a guard assembly comprising:

an actuating member mounted on said deck,

a hinge extending between and mounted to

10 two of said at least three sides of said deck at an angle  
with respect to said two of said at least three sides,

a guard attached to said actuating member  
and pivotally attached to said deck via said hinge, and

15 a flap which depends from said guard and is  
movable in relation to said guard, said flap being  
oriented in a plane spaced from a plane of said guard.

18. (Thrice Amended) A mower head comprising:

a deck comprising:

at least four sides, and

three side walls, one depending from each

5 of three of said at least four sides, wherein two of said  
three side walls are rigid;

at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to  
said deck on an axis extending through said deck, said  
deck being disposed above and generally parallel to said  
10 blade; and

a guard assembly comprising:

an actuating member mounted on said deck,

a hinge mounted to and extending at an

15 angle in relation to two adjacent ones of said at  
least four sides of said deck,

a guard attached to said actuating member  
and pivotally attached to said deck via said hinge, and

20 a flap which depends from said guard and is  
movable in relation to said guard, said flap being  
oriented in a plane spaced apart from a plane of said  
guard.

Es  
44. (Amended) The mower guard of claim 1, wherein said angle is formed between about 12 o'clock and 2 o'clock positions in relation to the front side of said deck.

Ex  
47. (Amended) The mower guard of claim 9, wherein said angle is formed between about 12 o'clock and 2 o'clock positions in relation to the front side of said deck.

Please add new claims 48 and 49:

48. (New) A mower head comprising:  
a deck having a longitudinal axis, at least three sides including a forward side and at least one side wall depending from said deck;

5 at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said deck on a rotational axis extending through said deck, said deck being disposed above and generally parallel to said blade; and

a guard assembly comprising:

10 an actuating member mounted on said deck,  
a guard attached to said actuating member and pivotally attached to said deck via a hinge which extends at an obtuse angle in relation to two adjacent ones of said at least three sides of said deck, including said  
15 forward side, wherein said guard is located on said forward side and an adjacent side such that said longitudinal axis extends near a side edge of said guard, and

a flap depending from said guard.

49. (New) A mower head comprising:  
a deck having five sides, four of which are perpendicular in relation to each other and a fifth side

which is oriented at an obtuse angle in relation to its adjacent sides;

5 at least one cutting blade rotatably mounted to said deck on a rotational axis extending through said deck, said deck being disposed above and generally parallel to said blade; and

a guard movably attached to said deck fifth side via a hinge which extends parallel to the deck fifth side.

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